

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 AGR-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1366

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, JA

SUBJ: JAPANESE SILK IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

REFS: A) STATE 189548, B) TOKYO 9141, C) SEOUL 2471, D) SEOUL 2688

E) SEOUL 2758, F) HONG KONG 6219

1. JAPANESE CUSTOMS STATISTICS SHOW 1976 IMPORTS OF SILK YARN FROM
U.S. AS FOLLOWS:

MONTH	KG
JANUARY	14,277
FEBRUARY	13,851
MARCH	11,219
APRIL	861
MAY	0

MITI OFFICIAL (HARADA, INTERNATIONAL TRADE DIV., CONSUMER GOODS INDUSTRIES BUREAU) ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HIS DIVISION IS NOW GIVING "CONFIRMATION STAMPS" (SEE REF B FOR EXPLANATION) FOR VERY LITTLE SILK YARN OTHER THAN THAT COMING IN UNDER QUOTA AGREEMENTS WITH ROK AND PRC (SEE REFS C-3) AND FROM BRAZIL AND DR VIETNAM WHICH ALSO HAVE INDIGENOUS SILK COCOON INDUSTRIES. (MAY CUSTOMS STATISTICS SHOW THAT THE ONLY JAPANESE IMPORTS OTHER THAN FROM THE ABOVE THREE COUNTRIES WERE 681 KG FROM HONG KONG.) HARADA SAID MITI IS CONTINUING STRATEGY, REPORTED REF B, OF PERMITTING LIMITED IMPORTS FROM COUNTRIES WHICH PRODUCE RAW SILK AND KEEPING PRESSURE ON THEM

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AND ON JAPANESE IMPORTERS TO STOP TRANSHIPMENTS VIA THIRD COUNTRIES.

MITI, HE ADDED, IS NOT GETTING MUCH COOPERATION FROM THE RAW SILK SUPPLIERS AND HAS RESORTED, HE ADMITTED, TO "HOLDING ONTO" APPLICATIONS FOR CONFIRMATION STAMPS.

2. HARADA SAID NO ONE IN GOJ HAS ANY ILLUSION THAT THIS BEHAVIOR SQUARES WITH JAPAN'S INTERNATIONAL TRADE OBLIGATIONS. ITALY, HE MENTIONED, IS THREATENING TO GO TO THE GATT AND INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES FROM OTHER AGGRIEVED COUNTRIES HAVE ALSO COMPLAINED. THE GOJ, HE ADDED, IS CAUGHT BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL EMBASSMENT AND THE DIET'S ADAMANT DETERMINATION IN AN ELECTION YEAR TO PROTECT THE QUARTER-MILLION JAPANESE FARM HOUSEHOLDS FOR WHOM SERICULTURE IS AN IMPORTANT SIDE-BUSINESS. IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE GOJ, HARADA CONCLUDED, A MORE PERMISSIVE IMPORT POLICY WOULD ONLY LEAD TO NEW RESTRICTIVE LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO UNDO ONCE THE MARKET TURNS UP.
SHOESMITH

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